REMARKS

Claims 1-8 are currently pending in this Application.

CLAIM REJECTIONS

Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

In the recent Office Action, Claims 1-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,360,106 To Besson (***Besson***) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,804,550 to Shepherd et al. (***Shepherd***).

Applicant traverses this rejection, and submits that the hypothetical combination cited by the Examiner does not include each of the features of the rejected claims.

Claim 1

Pending Claim 1 is reproduced below:

Claim 1. A method for reconfiguring base station equipment of a sectorized cell site to relieve high call blocking rates in a first, heavily utilized sector, the method comprising:

selecting a TCB cabinet housing transmission equipment, the TCB cabinet corresponding to a second sector having less call traffic relative to the first sector, the TCB cabinet having a plurality of transceiver slots;

placing a set of first sector transceivers ***in a first designated set of transceiver slots of the TCB cabinet***;

placing a set of second sector transceivers ***in a second designated set of transceiver slots of the TCB cabinet;***

placing a combiner card having first and second input port pairs in the associated slot of the TCB cabinet;

connecting the first input port pair of the combiner card to first sector multicouplers;

connecting the second input port pair of the combiner card to second sector multicouplers; and

wherein ***backplane circuitry of the TCB cabinet directs combined uplink signals from the first input port pair to the first designated set of transceiver slots and directs combined uplink signals from the second input port pair to the second designated set of transceiver slots.***

Applicant respectfully submits that no combination of ***Besson*** and ***Shepherd*** includes at least the elements highlighted above in bold italics. The advantage of this configuration is that a TCB cabinet can be used to house and facilitate the operation of transceivers transmitting in different sectors of a base station, where the problem solved is the previous need to purchase additional costly TCB cabinets. The purpose of placing a first set of transceivers in a first set of slots and a second set of transceivers in a second set of slots is so that signals corresponding to a first sector are not intermixed with signals corresponding to a second sector on the backplane of the TCB cabinet.

Applicant directs the Examiner to paragraph [0004] of the original application which states that, "Standard backplane circuitry in the TCB cabinet routes receive signals applied to the first pair of input ports to the transceivers inserted into the odd-numbered slots and receive signals applied to the second pair of input ports to the transceivers inserted into the even-numbered slots." The example given in the specification uses odd and even slots as the first and second designated slots due to the backplane configuration of the TCB cabinet used in the example, but this is exemplary and not limiting as the invention is adaptable to other TCB backplane configurations.

Referring now to Figure 2 of the original specification and its description, transceivers 206a and 206b are placed in slots of the TCB cabinet which route to the two input-port combiner card 208. The two input ports of combiner card 208 are coupled together and connected to the outputs of multicoupler cards 210. Compare the configuration of Figure 2 with that of Figure 4 where transceivers 206a and 206b have been moved to different slots in the TCB cabinet. The two input port card 208 has been replaced by a 4 input port card. The 4 input port card does not

have its input ports A1, A2 coupled to B1, B2. This provides an isolated path on the backplane of the TCB cabinet from A1, A2 to a first designated set of transceiver slots and from B1, B2 to a second set of transceiver slots. It is noteworthy that 4 input port combiner cards such as the one shown in Figure 4 were, at the time of the invention, typically used, not for configuring a base station as shown in Figure 4, but for providing redundant connections. (See paragraph [0011] of the original specification.)

This is not merely a shuffling and re-cabling of prior art components, but an innovative reconfiguration of components in order to solve the problem of a high blocking rate in a cell sector without the requiring the purchase of expensive additional equipment and/or the leasing of additional space for more cabinets.

Claims 2-4 depend from Claim 1 and are allowable over the cited art for at least the same reasons as discussed above with regard to Claim 1. Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of these claims be withdrawn.

Claim 2

With further regard to Claim 2, the Office Action states that, "applicant has not disclosed that having the first designated set of transceiver slots is the odd-numbered transceiver slots and the second designated set of transceiver slots is the even-numbered transceiver slots provides an advantage, is for a particular purpose, or solves as stated problem." Applicant respectfully submits that the original specification does indeed address the advantage, purpose, and problem solved by using odd and even-numbered slots in this manner. Applicant refers to the discussion of Claim 1 above, and to paragraphs [0004], [0009], and [0013]. Where, as in the example shown in the original specification, the odd-numbered and even-numbered slots utilize separate paths of the backplane of the TCB cabinet, such a designation prevents the signals for transceivers placed in odd slots from being mixed with those for transceivers placed in the even slots.

The Office Action goes on to state that, "One of ordinary skill in the art, furthermore, would have expected the applicant's invention to perform equally well without dividing the slots by even and odd numbers because the end result of dividing the transceivers would be the same." Respectfully, if using the TCB cabinet shown as an example in the original specification

which has backplane circuitry common to the even slots and separate circuitry common to the odd slots, the invention would not work "equally well" as stated in the Office Action. The signals intended for transceivers of respective sectors of the base station would be intermixed.

Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 5

Pending Claim 5 is reproduced below:

Claim 5. A base station apparatus for a sectorized cell site having at least a first and a second sector, the base station configured to relieve high call blocking rates in the first sector, comprising:

a TCB cabinet housing transmission equipment, the TCB cabinet having a plurality of transceiver slots;

a set of first sector transceivers located in a first designated set of transceiver slots of the TCB cabinet;

a set of second sector transceivers located in a second designated set of transceiver slots of the TCB cabinet;

a combiner card having first and second input port pairs located in an associated slot of the TCB cabinet;

a connection between the first input port pair of the combiner card and first sector multicouplers;

a connection between the second input port pair of the combiner card and second sector multicouplers; and

backplane circuitry in the TCB cabinet configured to route combined uplink signals from the first input port pair to the first designated set of transceiver slots and to route combined uplink signals from the second input port pair to the second designated set of transceiver slots.

Applicant respectfully submits that no combination of ***Besson*** and ***Shepherd*** includes at least the elements highlighted above in bold italics. Applicant refers to the discussion above with regard to Claim 1 and submits that Claim 5 is allowable over the cited art for at least these reasons.

Claims 6-8 depend from Claim 5 and are allowable over the cited art for at least the same reasons as discussed above with regard to Claim 5. Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of these claims be withdrawn.

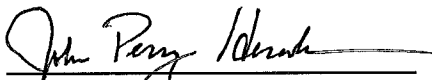
Claim 6

With further regard to Claim 6, Applicant refers to the discussion of Claim 2 above. Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that this Application is in condition for allowance and Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued. No new matter has been added. No additional fees are believed due, but if such fees are due, authorization is give to charge deposit account 50-3447. If the Examiner believes that there are any issues which can be resolved via a telephone conference or by an Examiner's amendment, a telephone call to the undersigned at (678) 325-6601 is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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